CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	**Shipwheel Cattle Co. Spring Development**
Proposed Implementation Date:	Fall, 2021
Proponent:	**Shipwheel Cattle Co. / Klint and Lori Swanson**-- Lessees of Lease # 1387
Location:	Section 36, Township 30 North, Range 18 East
County:	Hill

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Mr. Swanson is proposing to develop a spring on the SW4SW4 of Section 36, Township 30 North, Range 18 East. The proposed spring will be used for stock water.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) Northeastern Land Office, and **Shipwheel Cattle Co. / Klint and Lori Swanson**-- Lessees of Lease # 1387 are involved in this project.

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

The proponent must obtain a water right from the DNRC's Water Resources Division. The State of Montana must be listed as one of the owners of the water right.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A (No Action) – The DNRC does not grant permission to **Shipwheel Cattle Co. / Klint and Lori Swanson**-- Lessees of Lease # 1387 to drill and install a new spring.

Alternative B (the Proposed action) – The DNRC does grant permission to **Shipwheel Cattle Co. / Klint and Lori Swanson**-- Lessees of Lease # 1387 to drill and install a new spring.

III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:

Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify any cumulative impacts to soils.

There are no fragile or unstable soils present in the area of the proposed spring development. The soils consist of silty loams to clay loams. The proposed spring development site is planned to avoid unstable areas and will have little impact to the soil profile.

No significant adverse impacts to the soils are anticipated.

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:
Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify cumulative effects to water resources.

The proposed spring development will take water from the local ground water supply. Based on the current number of wells in the immediate surrounding area, there should be little to no adverse impacts to the ground water supply.

No significant adverse impacts to water quality, quantity, or distribution are anticipated.

6. AIR QUALITY:
What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.

Dirt work may generate some airborne dust. These activities will minimally affect air quality for a very limited amount of time.

No significant adverse impacts to air quality are anticipated

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:
What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify cumulative effects to vegetation.

The proposed spring development location area is currently being used as grazing land. The vegetation species that are present include: Bluebunch Wheatgrass, Western Wheatgrass, Green Needlegrass, Needle & Thread, Prairie Junegrass, Sandberg Bluegrass, snowberry, woods rose, and Threadleaf Sedge. Installing a spring in this area is not expected to have significant adverse impacts to the vegetation cover, quantity or quality.

No significant adverse impacts to vegetation cover are anticipated.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:
Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

Local species may be displaced temporarily during construction and installation of the spring development. Post installation, there should be little to no impact to the local fauna's use of the site.

The proposed installation is not anticipated to impact the habitat of any of the local species.

No significant adverse impacts are anticipated.

9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:
Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

The Species of Concern Report from the Montana Natural Heritage Program indicates that the Hoary Bat, Little Brown Myotis, Spague's Pulpit, Long-billed Curlew, Northern Red Belly Dace, Iowa Darter, and Sauger may occur within the area in and around Section 36. During the site visit on September 23rd, 2021 there were no sightings of any of the species. The development of the stock water spring is not anticipated to have any adverse impacts to the species of concern. This species may traverse this tract and may be temporarily displaced near the proposed spring development location during construction activities for a short period of time.

No significant adverse impacts are anticipated.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:
Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

A field inspection of the proposed spring location was completed on September 23rd, 2021. No historic or archaeological sites were identified immediately near the proposed spring location.

No significant adverse impacts are anticipated.

11. AESTHETICS:
Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature,or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify cumulative effects to aesthetics.

The proposed spring development is not anticipated to have a significant impact to the aesthetics of the local area.

No significant adverse impacts are anticipated.

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:
Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify cumulative effects to environmental resources.

The proposed spring development will require the use of groundwater. The proposed spring's use of the local groundwater is not anticipated to significantly impact the groundwater levels in the local area.

No significant adverse impacts to environmental resources are anticipated.

13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA:
List other studies, plans or projects on this tract. Determine cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of current private, state or federal actions in the analysis area, and from future proposed state actions in the analysis area that are under MEPA review (scoped) or permitting review by any state agency.

There are no other projects or plans being considered on the tracts listed on this EA.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" If no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:
Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

There are some human safety risks associated with operating equipment. The proponent and their employees accept these risks as acceptable occupational hazards.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:
Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

The proposed spring would add a water source to a tract that has had limited water availability in the past. This will help better distribute livestock grazing throughout the tract.

No adverse impacts to agriculture activities are anticipated.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:
Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to the employment market.

The proposed activity will create work for a local water developer, but no new jobs will be created.

No adverse impacts to the employment market are anticipated.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:
Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

There are no direct or cumulative effects to taxes or revenue for the proposed project.

18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:
Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

There will be no increases in traffic, no changes in traffic patterns, and no need for additional fire protection, or police services.

No adverse impacts to government services are anticipated.

19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:
List State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, and other zoning or management plans, and identify how they would affect this project.

There are no zoning or other agency management plans affecting these lands.

20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:
Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

No adverse impacts to the recreational value are anticipated.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:
Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing.

The proposal does not include any changes to housing or developments.

No adverse impacts to population or housing are anticipated.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:
Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

There are no native, unique or traditional lifestyles or communities in the vicinity that would be impacted by the proposal.

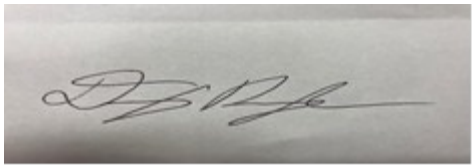
No adverse impacts are anticipated.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:
How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

The proposed project is not anticipated to have any adverse impacts to any unique quality of the area.

24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:
Estimate the return to the trust. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

No monetary return to the trust is anticipated.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	**Name:** Daniel Pendergraph **Title:** Land Use Specialist
Signature: 	**Date**: 11/12/2021

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

I have selected the Proposed Alternative B and recommend that permission be granted to **Shipwheel Cattle Co. / Klint and Lori Swanson**-- Lessees of Lease # 1387 to install the proposed spring development.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

I have evaluated the potential environmental effects and have determined that no significant adverse environmental impacts will result from the proposed activity.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

	EIS		More Detailed EA	**XXX**	No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	**Name:** Jocee Hedrick **Title:** Lewistown Unit Manager
Signature: 	**Date**: 11/8/2021